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General

- 1. How do I know if I am entitled to conditional ACIP?** You must be logged into a DIFOPS billet under DIFOPS orders in order to be entitled to receive conditional ACIP. DIFOPS means Duty Involving Flying. DIFOPS billets are billets identified with a four-digit billet designator ending in a 1 or a 2 (XXX1 or XXX2). Your detailer can help you understand what billet you are in currently (or being assigned to next). DIFOPS orders will state, in the “ultimate activity” section, “report to _____ for duty in a flying status involving flying”.
- 2. When does my entitlement to conditional ACIP begin?** You must accumulate 4.0 hours in order to earn your first month of ACIP. If you report in January, start flying in February, log 2.0 hours in February, and then fly another 2.0 hours in March, your ACIP entitlement begins 1 March (the 2.0 hours in February do not get “used” because you do not earn ACIP for February; therefore they are treated as excess and are added to your March total). You cannot enter a grace period until you have earned at least one month of ACIP; for this reason, in the above example, you cannot earn the February or January pay by flying excess in March.
- 3. When does my entitlement to conditional ACIP end, assuming I fly sufficient flight hours?** You are assumed for ACIP purposes to be under your current orders in your current billet until the date of your “detachment of individual” fitness report. The day after that, you are considered to be “logged in” to your next billet and your next set of orders. So if you are a flight surgeon in an air wing, billet designator 2102, and you receive your detaching fitness report with an ending date 31 December, and you then report to residency (billet designator 2100)—then your last day of ACIP entitlement is 31 December. (It does not matter if you flew excess flight hours in December, you are not entitled to ACIP for January, for example, because you are no longer under DIFOPS orders.)
- 4. Does simulator time or operation of unmanned aerial systems count toward my minimum requirements?** No. Only actual flight time (pilot time or special crew time) flown in aircraft in flight in the sky can earn you conditional ACIP.

Preparing the Flight Hour Verification Letter and Endorsement

- 5. Is there a template for the verification letter? How about the endorsement?** Yes, both. Templates are available at <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/aviation/OCM/Pages/ACIP.aspx>
- 6. Why don't the templates on the ACIP website (for the flight hour verification letter, and for the endorsement letter) match exactly with what is in the OPNAVINST 7220.18?** The OPNAVINST 7220.18 is badly in need of updating and correcting. Unfortunately it is “frozen” for now, pending an update to the overarching DoD instruction which governs ACIP. So we are stuck with the OPNAVINST in its current form until further notice. **Please use the Microsoft Word document templates that are hanging on the website, not the templates that are in the OPNAVINST.** The templates hanging on the website have been modified from what is in the instruction in order to make the verification process easier to understand for the ACIP recipient and the endorser, and to ensure that the program manager has exactly what information he needs to perform an accurate audit.
- 7. Why does the template for my flight verification letter ask for 18 months' worth of flight hours?** Instead of just the months within the fiscal year (FY) in question? We ask for flight hours flown in the 12 months within the FY in question, plus the six months prior. This helps us identify excess flight hours from before the FY began, which may have earned you your ACIP entitlement for a month within the FY, which otherwise might look like a shortfall month. The truth, however, is that a correct accounting cannot be performed without documentation of an officer's monthly flight hours for the entire DIFOPS tour. For this reason, the Program Manager archives all flight hour verification letters from previous years, and refers to them during each year's audit. Most audits can be performed using just two letters (current audit year and the year prior), but it is not uncommon for the audit to require three or four years' worth of letters in order to get it right. For this reason, all officers receiving conditional ACIP are encouraged to keep their own archive of their verification letters for all years.
- 8. Should I document my own accounting of the carryover rules on my verification letter?** No. The flight hour verification letter must clearly document the exact number of flight hours (in “tenths digit” format e.g. 10.2, 5.3, 2.9, etc) that were flown in aircraft, in flight, by the officer in question, during the months in question, as logged by the pilot in command. If you wish to keep your own running tab of excess flight hours and the carryover rules, please do so on your own, and, if your accounting differs from the results that you receive from the program manager, then contact him to resolve the difference between your accounting and his.
- 9. Does the annual flight hour endorsement letter need a command endorsement?** Yes. In all cases. Flight hour verifications will not be accepted without command endorsement.

10. Who should sign the endorsement letter for my flight hour verification? The officer or person who signs your fitness report as your reporting senior should be the one signing your endorsement letter. If you receive concurrent fitness reports, or you otherwise answer to two bosses, an endorsement from the CO of the aviation unit with which you do your flying is preferable an endorsement from your medical chain of command. *It is essential that endorser understand their role in this process. They are not “recommending approval” of anything; they are verifying that your letter contains a true, accurate, correct documentation of flight time actually performed in aircraft.* That is why their endorsement letter must contain the language provided in the template.

11. My admin department changed the endorsement letter from the format in the template. Re-formatting the margins, the header, etc is fine; please ensure however that the language in the endorsement letter remains the same as that in the template. Also please ensure that the endorsement letter is signed and is on command letterhead.

Conditional ACIP “Waiver”; the Six Month Rule

12. Who has the authority to waive my minimum flight hour requirements? No one. There is no such thing. No person can waive the requirement to fly 4.0 hours per month (in aircraft, real flying) in order to earn conditional ACIP. While there is no waiver, there is a provision known as the Six-Month Rule, described in the ACIP section of Chapter 22 of DoD 7000.14-R Volume 7A. See next question.

13. What is the Six-Month Rule? Is it a waiver? To avoid confusion, the Six-Month Rule should not be referred to as a waiver; the minimum requirement remains, as always, 4.0 flight hours for every month of ACIP disbursed; so in that sense the requirement is not really being waived. *The Six-Month Rule is the Commanding Officer’s authority to determine that either a) aircraft unavailability or b) “military operations, combat or otherwise” caused an officer to be unable to fly in the normal, regular pattern that would enable her to comply with the minimum requirements stipulated by DoD 7000.14-R Volume 7A Chapter 22; the CO thereby can grant the subject officer permission to achieve the minimums—i.e. 24.0 flight hours—for a given six-month period in any pattern.* Another way to think about it—it is essentially the CO’s authority to extend the three-month grace period (established by DoD 7000.14-R) to make it a six-month grace period (if you do not understand the three-month grace period, read “Understanding the Rules Governing Minimum Flight Hours for Conditional ACIP or HDIP-F”, on our website at <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/aviation/OCM/Pages/ACIP.aspx>). You still must fly 24.0 hours within the six-month period (as it is defined in writing by your CO), or the Six-Month Rule is void.

14. When can the Six-Month Rule begin? The DoD 7000.14-R contains specific rules to determine when the start of the Six-Month Rule. You must understand your carryover situation accurately in order to determine the correct start date. The simple answer is, the Six-Month Rule should be invoked starting when the CO declares that the unavailability or the military operations started to impact your ability to fly.

15. I want to request permission to use the Six-Month Rule. What should I do? Request it in writing from your CO. You can either include the request with your verification letter (and your CO’s approval in his/her endorsement letter), or you can write a separate request letter and the CO can write a separate letter granting permission to use the rule. When you initiate the request, please present your request to your CO along with this FAQ document, as well as the endorsement template (see paragraph 2) that is posted at <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/aviation/OCM/Pages/ACIP.aspx> to ensure that the CO understands what his/her authority is when it comes to the Six-Month rule.

Submitting the Flight Hour Verification Package

16. Do I need to submit NAVFLIRs, yellow sheets, flight logs, etc with my flight hour verification letter? No. The program manager does not count up NAVFLIR hours (too many of you, not enough of him). It is up to your endorser what documentation they require before signing your endorsement letter; but please do not submit additional “proof of flying”. We require a signed letter from you and a signed letter from your endorser, and nothing more.

17. When do I need to verify my flight hours? Just once a year, in October, right? Every dollar of conditional ACIP that you receive must be verified by submitting flight hours to the ACIP Program Manager. *This means that if you transfer to non-flying orders, or separate/retire, and it is January or May or August or November or whatever, you still need to remember to submit a flight hour verification package! Preferably as soon as you are done flying.* (If you are transferring from one DIFOPS tour to another, just do the standard end-of-FY letter.) But if you are going DIFDEN or separating, do not wait until October, when you will be busy in your residency or sitting on a beach in Rosarito and not thinking about ACIP! Please figure out a way to remind yourself to submit a final verification letter as soon as you finish flying (for a tour or for a career). If the program manager doesn’t hear from you, he has no

alternative but to recoup whatever ACIP was not earned by verified, documented flight hours. ACIP indebtedness that is identified and posted to your account after you have left active duty is a very nasty business. ***Please check out with PERS-435 before you leave your DIFOPS tour, especially if you are separating or retiring.***

18. What is the preferred method of submission? Scan and email to the program manager and mail original signed hard copies to:
Commander, Navy Personnel Command
PERS-435
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055-4300

19. Who is responsible for ensuring that my flight hour verification letter and endorsement have been received by the ACIP Program Manager? The service member receiving the ACIP is responsible. *Do not hand your letter to your admin department and forget about it.* Please ensure that your admin department returns copies of your letter and the signed endorsement letter to you; then scan them into .pdf format and email them to the program manager, so that you know that you have personally transmitted your package directly to the person who is expecting it. If in any doubt about who the program manager is, refer to the website <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/aviation/OCM/Pages/ACIP.aspx> or call 901-874-3484.

20. How do I know if my flight hour verification letter has been received? If you personally email your letter in to the program manager, you will receive a confirmation that it was received. At that point you can rest assured. Please do mail the original signed hard copies as well however.

Accounting and Recoupment

21. When does my entitlement to conditional ACIP end, assuming I fly sufficient flight hours? See [#3 above](#).

22. I don't understand the rules governing minimum monthly flight hours. Read "Understanding the Rules Governing Minimum Flight Hours for Conditional ACIP or HDIP-F", available on our website at <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/aviation/OCM/Pages/ACIP.aspx>

23. Is there a calculator or spreadsheet that can do this automatically? There are a few Microsoft Excel-based flight hour carryover calculators floating around out there. None of them are absolutely 100% perfectly aligned with the DoD 7000.14-R policy, and therefore there is no official calculator program endorsed by PERS-435 (although we are working on developing one and bringing more automation to the conditional ACIP program). But most of the calculators out there are quite helpful and will generally result in a pretty accurate accounting most of the time. (Remember, though, that a truly accurate accounting must originate at the start of a set of DIFOPS orders, and in many cases earlier even than that; so a calculator that only accepts 12 or 18 months of data cannot get it exactly right unless the officer in question began flying within that time period.) The official PERS-435-endorsed method of accounting is to read "Understanding the Rules Governing Minimum Flight Hours for Conditional ACIP or HDIP-F" (available on our website at <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/aviation/OCM/Pages/ACIP.aspx>) and perform your own accounting by hand.

24. Can I have a copy of the PERS-435 Conditional ACIP Calculator Program? No such thing. PERS-435 audits every conditional ACIP account annually (or more often as required), by hand, using current and previous flight hour verification letters.

25. Why does it take so long to hear back from PERS-435 after I submit my flight hour verification? All conditional ACIP and HDIP-F audits are performed manually by one person, whose full time job is *not* the auditing of conditional ACIP accounts. We are working on increasing automation of the program, but for the time being your patience is appreciated. If you need expedited handling—for example if you are separating or retiring and you know you need to have some ACIP recouped before you go—please let the program manager know your situation and we will do our best to accommodate.

26. I can't fly enough in my current job. Can PERS-435 turn off my ACIP, and credit me after the fact for those months that I earned? Generally not; due to the high volume of conditional ACIP traffic at any given time, and the low manpower availability at PERS-435, we cannot offer custom handling of your conditional ACIP account. Please do your best to fly your minimums and, if you know you are going to fall short, bank the ACIP money and be prepared for recoupment. If your situation is dire, however, please contact the program manager, and we will try to find a solution that accommodates your needs.